Boarding Houses
and Hotels
of Midway

Boarding Houses

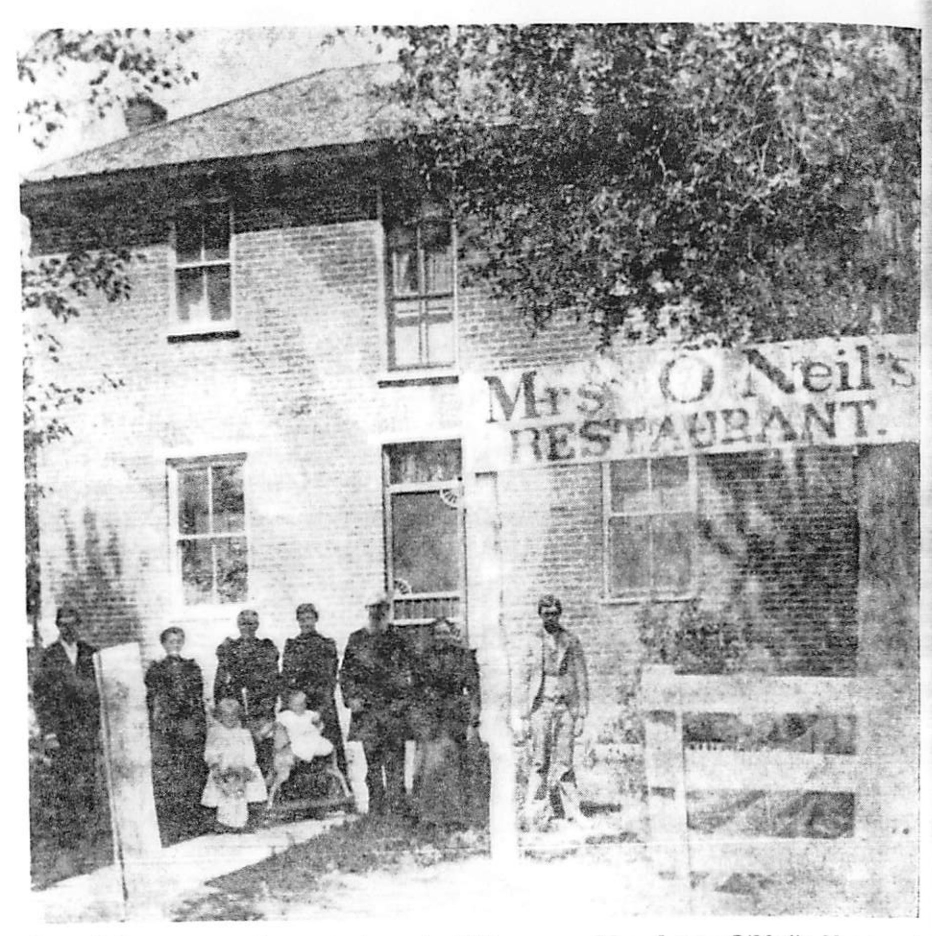
of Midway

BOARDING HOUSES

Midway boarding houses in the early mining days were a boon to the men who worked away from their homes. The money these transient workers left in the community was also a welcome asset to townspeople.

One of the more popular boarding establishments was run by Mrs. Agnes O'Neil, affectionately called "Aunt Nanny O'Neil." She successfully managed the establishment for many years, and then when her health failed, a daughter, Mrs. Agnes Ritchie, took over the management.

Another well regulated and popular boarding house was operated by Mrs. Letty Bronson. Some boarding houses were also kept at the mine sites. There was one at White Pine Canyon and another at the Snake Creek Tunnel. The Old Steamboat Mine also had a boarding house. p585



One of the most popular spots in early Midway was Mrs. Agnes O'Neil's Hotel and Restaurant. Shown here in front of the building in this 1897 photograph are, left to right, Samuel O'Neil, Ruth Rockwood O'Neil, Helen Ritchie, baby James Ritchie, Aunt Nannie O'Neil, Agnes Ritchie, Samuel Hair, Rachel Hair and Robert Hair.

Written January 20, 1917, by William Lindsay:

'Tis many a year since first we met
  To visit Nannie O'Neil
To celebrate her natal day
  And wish weh kind heart "weel"
We met a hearty welcome
  In her cheerful, kindly way
And many a happy time we've had
  With her the livelong day
Many of those who used to come
  Have passed away and gone.

→ over

Their bodies sleeping in their graves
    'Til the resurrection morn
Aunt Nannie, too, was called away
    When nearly eighty-seven
And everyone of us feels sure
    That she is now in Heaven
Because she kept the laws of God
    As nearly as she could
And trusted everyone she met
    As all true Christians should.
Those of her friends who yet remain
    Still hold the memory dear
And gladly meet to celebrate
    Her Birthday every year.

At the peak of mining there were several Chinese cooks who hired in the area. "One Fan" was a beloved character who cooked at camps in the hills west of Midway. On one occasion young Nate Coleman came running to his father with an especially large piece of pie and exclaimed "Oh, Daddy, see what 'Parasol One' gave me."

Barber shops were operated at various times in Midway by Harry Bircumshaw, William Wheable, Thomas Hair, Mulholland Hair, Walter Van Wagoner and Bert Bonner.

John Mohlman and Mr. Kuhni repaired and made shoes.

Pool halls were operated by Erwin Alder, Walter Van Wagoner, Dow Epperman, Jack Derry and Keith Bronson.

When the railroads came to the area and transportation facilities improved many of the boarding houses closed.

The O'Neil hotel still stands on Midway's Main Street, used today as a private residence.

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